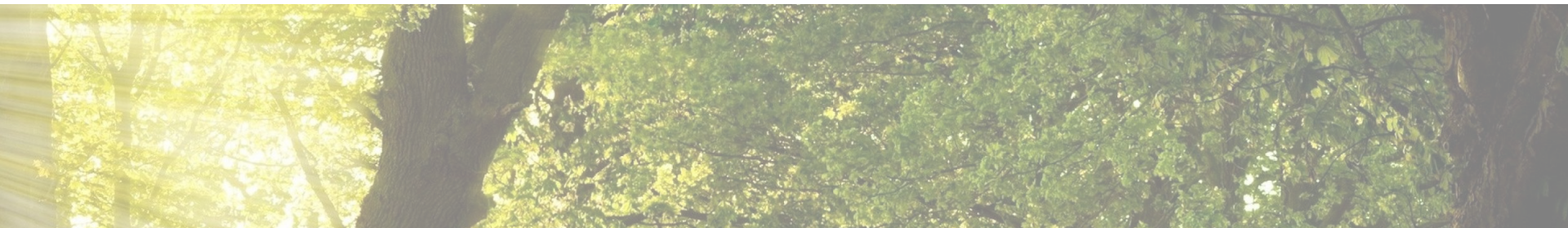


# The Power of the Position Statement

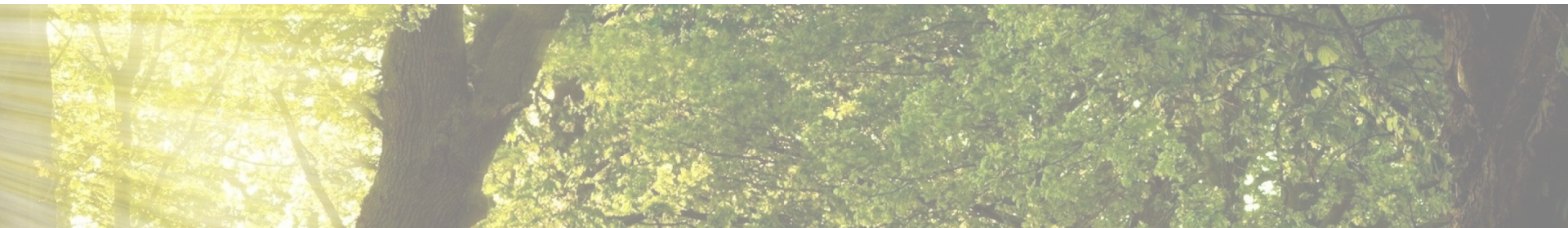
AMICCUS-C National Professional Conference 2023

**Josh Thomas & Grace Dupasquier**

**A few things before we start...**



**What are we going to be talking about today?**

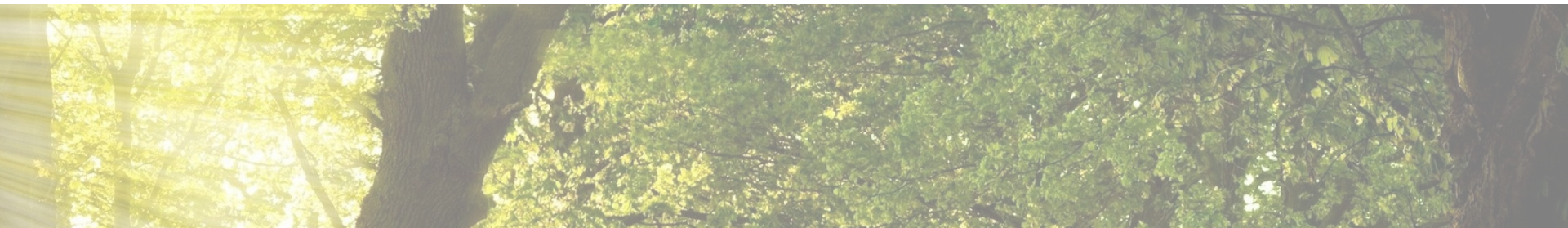


# What are we going to be talking about today?



- What are position statements?
- Why develop position statements?
- How do position statements get developed?
- Key components to include in position statements
- How to keep position statements accessible
- Position statements in practice
- Examples of position statements for student unions

# What are position statements?

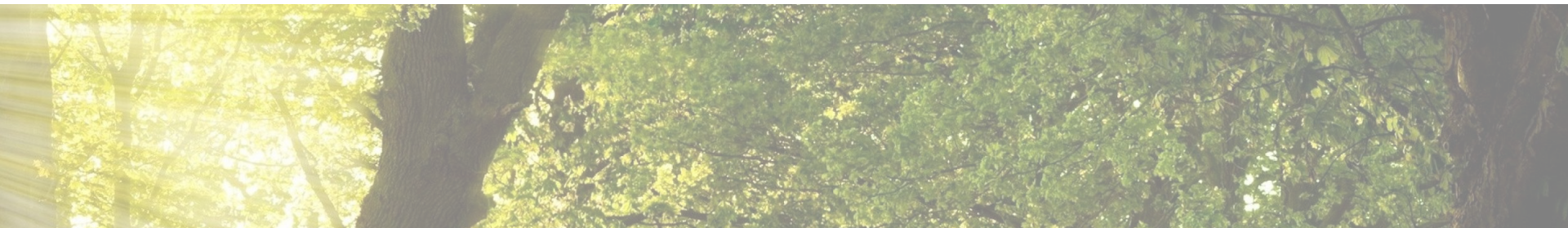


# What are position statements?



- A fact-based, research-driven expression of opinion on a particular issue
- Outlines the foundation of a society's priorities - "what the society stands for"
- Driven by student input and ideas on issues important to them
- Co-created by staff with support and direction from student executives
- Directs a society's university and government advocacy efforts
- Informs the society's campaigns on government and academic policies
- Public facing documents for student members and the community

# How do position statements get developed?



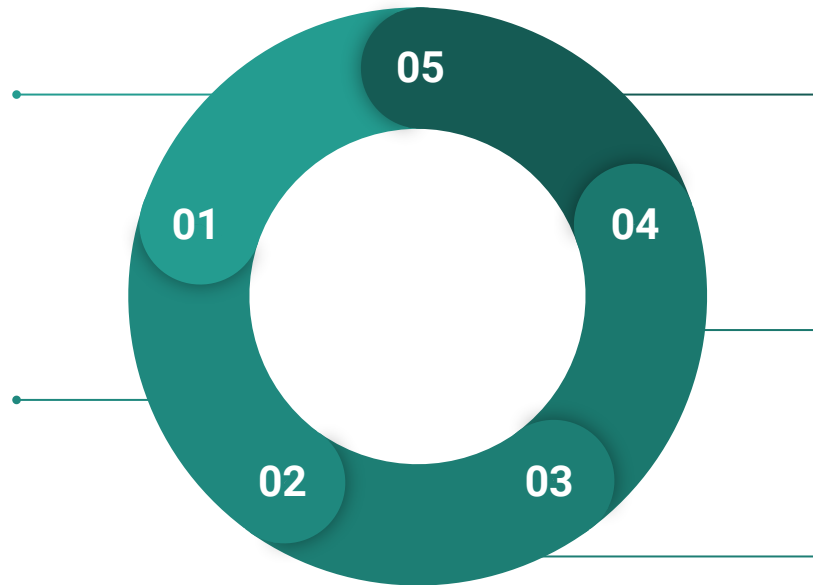
# Position Statement Development Cycle

## Proposal

Elected student leaders or staff identify an issue that affects students and thinks the society should take a stance on it for the purpose of taking action to fix it.

## Research & Analysis

Extensive research takes place to analyze the issue, and ensure the organization approaches it from a data-driven, evidence-based method. This ensures the position is accurate, effective, and has legitimacy.



## Review and Refinement

Position statements should be reviewed often to ensure they remain up-to-date and accurately reflect current student priorities. Then the cycle starts again.

## Approval

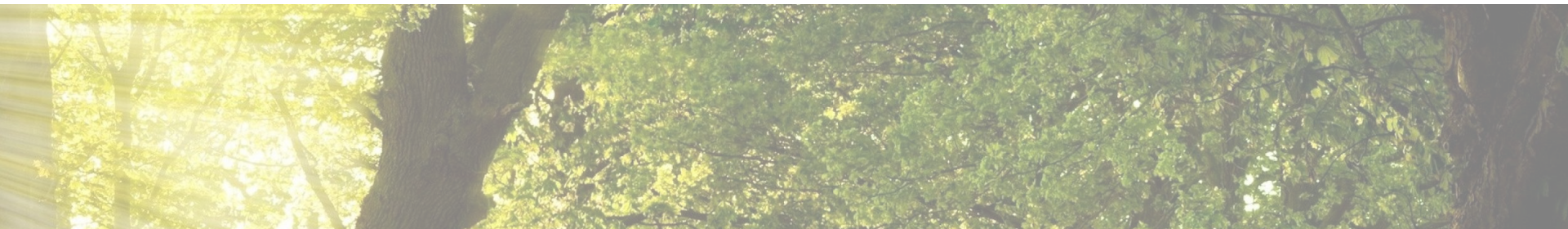
Once the position statement is complete it goes through student review before going on to final approval. For example, committee or board. May need  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote.

## Consultation

To ensure any position is in-line with stakeholder viewpoints, consultation takes place with relevant people. This could be students, university staff, board leadership, MLA's, external partners, etc.



# Key components of position statements





Policy No.	Approval Authority
IS-21	Board of Directors
Policy Name	Approval Date
Food Security	March 2023
Responsible	Scheduled Review
Campaigns & Advocacy	March 2026



## Summary

### Access to good affordable food is essential

Food is essential for post-secondary students during their educational careers. Access to high-quality, nutritious, affordable food is vital for physical and mental health, academic performance, social inclusion and well-being. However, many students lack food security during post-secondary education and suffer negative impacts on their quality of life.

A lack of food can lead to malnutrition, poor health, and chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.<sup>1</sup> Food insecurity can also lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, impacting a student's mental health and overall well-being. Academics can also suffer from increased rates of absenteeism, decreased attention and focus, and low motivation.<sup>2</sup> Since access to food is a basic need, students who do not have access to adequate food may experience stigma, shame, and social isolation.<sup>3</sup>

### Students are heavily impacted by food insecurity

In the 2021/22 academic year, fifty-seven per cent (57%) of students surveyed by *Meal Exchange* faced moderate to severe food insecurity, which has increased from forty-two per cent (42%) of students who reported food insecurity in the 2020/21 academic year.<sup>4</sup>


## ← Statement Information

General information about the position statement including name, review date, committee responsible, and approval authority.

## ← Summary of Position

Background and outline of the position,, summarizing the issue, reasons why this affects students, and key asks to fix the problem.



 Capilano Students' Union	<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
	IS-20	Board of Directors
	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
	Tuition Installment Plan	February 3, 2023
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Scheduled Review</b>
	Campaigns & Advocacy	February 2026

## Definitions

In this policy:

“**tuition**” means the portion of fees paid by students that relate to tuition and program fees, incidental fees and additional costs for supplies and equipment.

“**mandatory fees**” means other fees that must be paid by students such as the student success fee, student services and technology fee, term enrolment, CSU health and dental plan fee, student union building levy and U-Pass BC fees.

## Rationale

The Capilano Students’ Union has adopted these policy principles because:

- Many students, especially international students, have reported finding it difficult to pay their entire tuition amount when it is due at the beginning of the semester.
- A tuition installment plan can increase access to post-secondary education by reducing financial barriers for those who may not have the means to pay for their education upfront.
- A tuition installment plan reduces the number of students who drop out due to financial constraints.
- A tuition installment plan can reduce debt by allowing students to better budget their expenses over the semester.

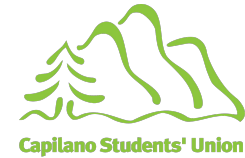
## ← Definition of terms

Definitions are important to ensure that all readers understand exactly what terms mean, so the position statement can be read and understood accurately

## ← Rationale for position

Key reasons that support why the society has adopted this position - why it affects students, why this is a problem, etc.

	<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
	IS-17	Board of Directors
	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
	<b>Public Transportation</b>	April 17, 2020
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Scheduled Review</b>
	Campaigns & Advocacy Committee	<i>April 2023</i>



## Policy Principles

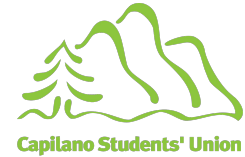
1. The Capilano Students' Union supports initiatives that encourage:
  - a. Fare-free access for children and youth under the age of 19 to all methods of public transportation in British Columbia;
  - b. A permanent program in British Columbia that offers affordable transit passes (monthly passes, day passes, and single trip fares) to address the needs of Capilano University students at the *kálaḡ-ay* (Sunshine Coast) campus as well as vulnerable and marginalized groups such as, but not limited to, low-income individuals, seniors, and people with accessibility needs;
  - c. A permanent program in British Columbia that offers affordable BC Ferries fares and passes to vulnerable and marginalized groups such as, but not limited to, university students, low-income individuals, seniors, and people with accessibility needs;
  - d. Improved and increased accessibility features on all methods of transportation and the incorporation of sufficient minimum accessibility standards for all transit vehicles;
  - e. Rapid transit such as, but not limited to, SkyTrain, subways, or light rail to and from as well as connecting neighbourhoods on the North Shore;
  - f. Increased frequency and more convenient transit routes to and from the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal to accommodate the needs of students at the *kálaḡ-ay* - the Sunshine Coast campus;
  - g. Increased frequency on already-existing North Shore bus routes with high ridership, including buses to Capilano University;

## ← Principles

List of principles that outline exactly what the CSU believes and stands for in regards to the policy issue.



<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
IS-21	Board of Directors
<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
Food Security	March 2023
<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Scheduled Review</b>
Campaigns & Advocacy	March 2026



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<sup>1</sup> Jason M Nagata, Palar Kartika , Holly C Gooding, Andrea K Garber, Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, and Sheri D Weiser. "Food Insecurity and Chronic Disease in US Young Adults," in *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 34, no. 12 (December 2019): 2756–62. doi:10.1007/s11606-019-05317-8, Page 1

<sup>2</sup> N Hattangadi, E Vogel, LJ Carroll, and P. Côté. "Is Food Insecurity Associated with Psychological Distress in Undergraduate University Students? A Cross Sectional Study," in *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition* 16, no. 1 (January 2021): 133–48. doi:10.1080/19320248.2019.1658679, Page 2

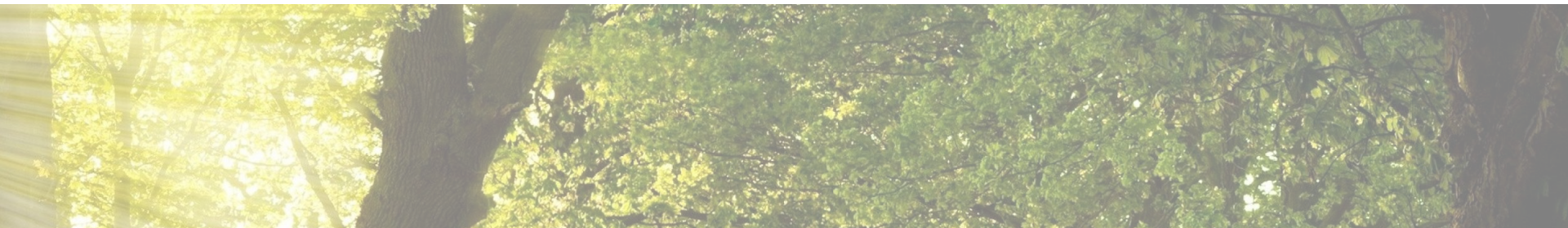
<sup>3</sup> Hamelin, A. M., Habicht, J. P., & Beaudry, M. (1999). Food insecurity: Consequences for the household and broader social implications. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 129(2), 525S–528S. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jn/129.2.525s>

<sup>4</sup> Meal Exchange. "2021 NATIONAL STUDENT FOOD INSECURITY REPORT.", 9.

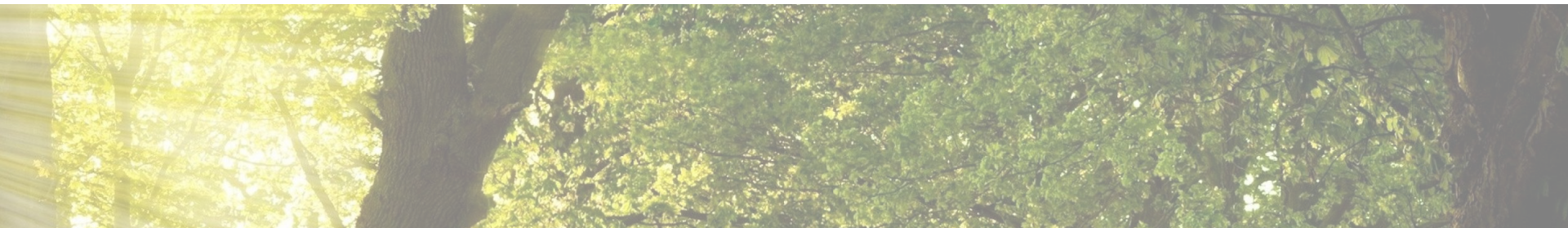
### ← Research References

Important that every policy is data-driven and research-informed.

# The importance of non-partisanship



# How to keep position statements accessible?



# How to keep position statements accessible?

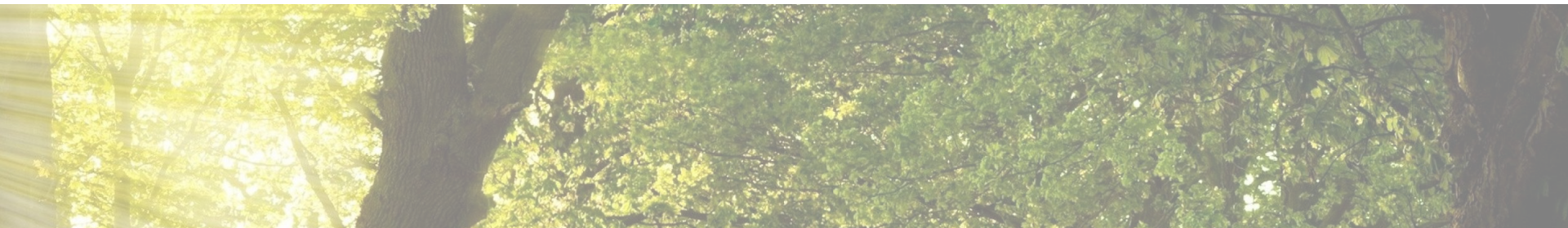


- Clear and easy-to-read language
- Clear formatting and page design
- Publically available online or in-office for student members or the community
- Create a brief summary of all positions for board member training

Found on [csu.bc.ca/governance](https://csu.bc.ca/governance)



# What not to do



## PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

**POLICY NUMBER**  
POL-004

**EFFECTIVE DATE**  
Sept 4, 2018

**APPROVAL DATE**  
Sept 4, 2018

**REVIEW DATE**  
Sept 4, 2021

**RESPONSIBLE BODY**  
Campaigns and Advocacy

### SUMMARY

The Capilano Students' Union supports a move to a proportional representation system of elections provincially. The current system, known as FPTP, consistently results in vote totals being wildly inconsistent with the number of seats won. This exists at the individual riding level, within individual sub-regions, such as Capilano University's own North Shore, and in the province as a whole. The CSU believes that the number of seats that a party is allotted in the legislature should be roughly similar to the percentage of the vote that they receive, ensuring that representative democracy is truly representative of the electorate, and further, that voters should not feel like their vote will not have an impact because of the region they live in.

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**PR:** Proportional Representation, an alternative voting system to FPTP.

**STV:** Single Transferable Vote, an alternative voting system to FPTP

**FPTP:** First Past the Post, AKA winner take all is the current voting system that BC and Canada exist under.

**Riding:** The area or region that elects a representative.

**MLA:** Member of the Legislative Assembly

**MP:** Member of Parliament

**MMP:** Mixed Member Plurality, a method of voting where half of members are directly elected in their riding, and the other half are elected via the regional proportional of their party vote

**DMP:** Dual Member Plurality, a method of voting where half of the MLAs are elected in their ridings, and each riding elects a second MLA based on a combination of that ridings election results and provincial election results

**RUP:** Rural Urban Proportional. a method of voting where rural ridings would use a **MMP** style system to elect MLAs and urban areas would use STV

### PREAMBLE

**WHEREAS** the Capilano Students' Union supports a fair and equitable electoral process; and

**WHEREAS** the FPTP electoral system discourages voters by ensuring that in most ridings, their vote will not matter; and

**WHEREAS** FPTP frequently results in MLAs or MPs being elected with substantially less than a majority of the vote within their own riding; and

**WHEREAS** FPTP results in individual party's being unable to elect a representative from entire sub-regions with four or more MLAs, despite consistently earning between 25 and 35% of the vote; and

**WHEREAS** at the provincial level, FPTP results in regular majority governments to parties that are only able to attract a minority of the voters; and

**WHEREAS** a more proportional voting system would ensure that voters feel that their vote counts, thus helping to reduce voter apathy and encourage higher turnout; and

**WHEREAS** any one of the three electoral systems presented in the 2018 referendum represent more fair and proportional systems than FPTP, thus ensuring the legislature will better reflect the will of the voters;

### POLICY

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the CSU supports a move to a proportional representation voting system;


**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the CSU believes that each of the three options for reform would be an improvement over First Past the Post; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the CSU encourage voters to vote in favour of a more proportional representation voting system.

### FURTHER DOCUMENTATION

[Internally produced research document](#)



 Capilano Students' Union	<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
	IS-20	Board of Directors
	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
	Tuition Installment Plan	February 3, 2023
	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Scheduled Review</b>
	Campaigns & Advocacy	February 2026

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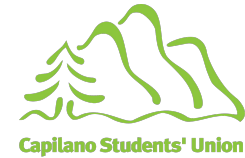
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Key reasons that support why the society has adopted this position - why it affects students, why this is a problem, etc.

	<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
	IS-17	Board of Directors
	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
	<b>Public Transportation</b>	April 17, 2020
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	Campaigns & Advocacy Committee	<i>April 2023</i>



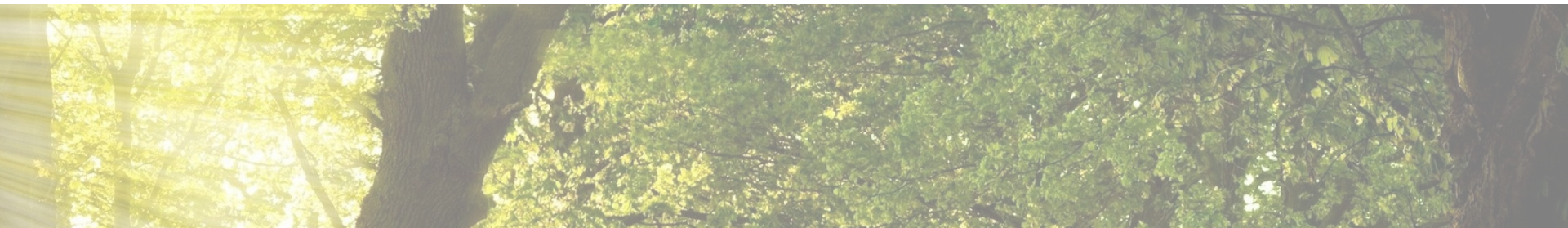
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# Position statements in practice

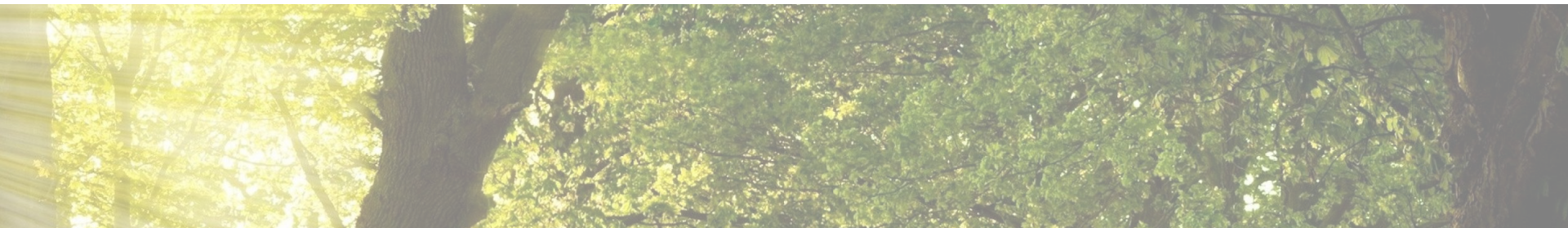


# Position statements in practice



- Media interviews / comments
- Government budget submissions
- Consultations
- Lobby meetings
- “Soft lobbying”
- Determining alignment with other student unions / advocacy partners / community organizations
- Keeping rogue board members in line

# Examples of position statements for student unions



# Overview of official CSU positions (board training)





## Questions?

**Josh Thomas • Director, Policy & Campaigns**  
jthomas@csu.bc.ca

**Grace Dupasquier • Student Advocate**  
grace.dupasquier@outlook.com

# IS-01 Student Housing Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Provincial Government, University, Developers</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports the building of high-quality, purpose-built, affordable student housing and the maintenance of student residences as only owned and operated by public, community-based or non-profit organizations.

# IS-02 Fall Academic Break Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union is in favour of a week-long academic reading break in the fall semester to address the very real and urgent mental health crisis on its campuses.

# IS-03 Exam Schedule Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports an exam schedule that has all end-of-term exams listed, is posted during the time of course registration at the beginning of the semester, is emailed to all students, upon its confirmation and is posted in every building at all Capilano University campuses.

# IS-05 International Student Tuition Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	Provincial Government, University
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports limiting international student tuition increases to domestic student tuition increases on the same percentage basis as domestic tuition increases.

# IS-06 Needs-Based Grants Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Provincial Government</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports a needs-based grants program which is accessible to part-time and full-time undergraduate and graduate students, is not contingent on program completion and includes provisions for students with accessibility needs and/or dependents.

# IS-07 International Student Working Hours Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Federal Government</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union is in favour of the Government of Canada lifting restrictions on the number of hours that an international student is permitted to work off-campus.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union is in favour of the Government of Canada extending the eligibility to work off-campus to part-time international students.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union is in favour of the Government of Canada changing study permits to allow international students to work co-op terms or internships that are components of the student's educational program without having to apply for additional permits.</p>

# IS-08 Student Tenancy Rights Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Provincial Government</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports the implementation of legislation or orders-in-council that support student rights in post-secondary institution operated housing.



# IS-09 Open Educational Resources Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Provincial Government, University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports the adoption and integration of open educational resources at Capilano University.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union supports provincial and institutional funding to expand the available open educational resources.</p>

# IS-11 Credit and No Credit Courses Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union is in favour of allowing a student in a degree program to request that any course satisfying a degree program's elective or breadth requirements (or any other course unrelated to the core subject matter of the degree program) be recorded on a "credit granted" or "no credit granted" basis, excluded from grade point averages.

# IS-12 Reactivation after Withdrawal Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports allowing a student who has withdrawn with extenuating circumstances (including students in cohorts) to reactivate student status and resume studies if they are able to return within five academic years of the semester from which they withdrew.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union opposes the application of the full readmission process, including the charging of fees, to students who have withdrawn with extenuating circumstances, and who are now seeking to resume studies at Capilano University.</p>

# IS-13 Unpaid Practicums Policy



**Directed to:**

**Provincial Government, University**

**Principles:**

The Capilano Students' Union supports initiatives that encourage the complete eradication of illegal unpaid internships in British Columbia, including practicums and work experience; providing only paid internship and practicum options to students completing work experience courses required for program completion; oversight and investigation by university administration to ensure the actual amount of instructor contact time is proportionate to the tuition and fees charged; and reducing or eliminating tuition and fees for courses that require students to spend the majority of their class time working an unpaid internship or practicum.

# IS-14 Climate Advocacy Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports any appropriate action necessary to mitigate climate change and contribute to the limiting of global warming to 1.5°C or lower by 2030.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union recognizes that Indigenous sovereignty and climate justice are inextricably linked, and that real reconciliation with Indigenous peoples cannot be achieved without both concrete action to mitigate climate change and the harm caused by it, and implementation of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i>.</p>

# IS-14 Climate Advocacy Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports initiatives that encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sustainable buildings and infrastructure including alternative energy sources</li><li>• reduction of the use or consumption of plastics, food waste, water, and energy on Capilano University campuses</li><li>• implementation of improved public transportation infrastructure on the North Shore that is accessible to all students, reduces the number of student drivers and shortens commute time for all students</li><li>• development of complete communities on the North Shore and surrounding neighbourhoods that connect students with convenient health care, shopping, and recreation options as well as their place of work and school, and eliminate the need for reliance on a personal automobile.</li></ul>

# IS-14 Climate Advocacy Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports Capilano University in taking action in these key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• adapting stronger greenhouse gas emissions targets that specifically address the urgency of climate change mitigation within the next ten years: the university should re-evaluate and adjust their current targets to target of at least an 80% (or larger) emissions reductions by 2030</li><li>• complete divestment from fossil fuel industries and taking an active opposition to fossil fuel infrastructure such as, but not limited to, pipelines, terminals, and tankers</li><li>• updating the Capilano University Sustainability Policy to create more accountability to specific plans for action</li><li>• conducting consistent consultations with students in the process of developing new strategies and policies surrounding climate change issues.</li></ul>

# IS-14 Climate Advocacy Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union opposes initiatives that involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• support, investment, or participation in the development of fossil fuel infrastructure such as, but not limited to, pipelines, terminals, and tankers.</li><li>• promotion or distribution of any information or literature that denies climate change and its negative impacts</li></ul>



# IS-15 US Indigenous Student Tuition Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports Capilano University in charging Indigenous students from the United States, including all territories, domestic student tuition fees.</p> <p>The Capilano Students' Union supports all Canadian universities in charging Indigenous students from the United States, including all territories, domestic student tuition fees.</p>

# IS-16 International Student Financial Aid Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Provincial Government, Federal Government, University</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	The Capilano Students' Union supports a financial aid program that is accessible to all international students, is accessible to part-time and full-time undergraduate and graduate students, is not contingent on program completion and includes provisions for students with accessibility needs and/or dependents.

# IS-17 Public Transportation Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports initiatives that encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• free access to public transit for anyone under 19,</li><li>• an affordable pass system being established for transit on the Sunshine Coast,</li><li>• an affordable pass system for BC Ferries,</li><li>• increased accessibility features on all transit vehicles</li><li>• Rapid Transit options on the North Shore.</li></ul>

# IS-17 Public Transportation Policy



<b>Directed to:</b>	<b>Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<i>In progress</i>
<b>Principles:</b>	<p>The Capilano Students' Union supports initiatives that encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Increased transit to the Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal,</li><li>● increased frequency for high-ridership routes on the North Shore,</li><li>● infrastructure which allows transit to bypass traffic (bus lanes, skytrains, etc.),</li><li>● adding transit routes to service rural communities,</li><li>● New infrastructure that meets the needs of cyclists and pedestrians</li><li>● development of complete communities on the North Shore which eliminate the need for reliance on a personal automobile.</li></ul>

# IS-17 Public Transportation Policy



**Directed to:**

**Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, University, External Organizations**

**Principles:**

The Capilano Students' Union opposes initiatives that involve:

- expansion of multi-lane highways;
- investment of Translink funds in more transit policing and law enforcement
- unaffordable housing developments on the North Shore
- changes to the transit system that result in a decrease in service to Capilano University campuses and residences.



## Questions?

Josh Thomas • Director, Policy & Campaigns  
[jthomas@csu.bc.ca](mailto:jthomas@csu.bc.ca)

Grace Dupasquier • Student Advocate  
[grace.dupasquier@outlook.com](mailto:grace.dupasquier@outlook.com)